

In re Patent Application of:
LUE CHEE LIP ET AL.
Serial No. 09/988,907
Filing Date: **NOVEMBER 20, 2001**

REMARKS

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the thorough examination of the present application. The independent claims have been amended to remove "only" therefrom to address the written description requirement raised by the Examiner. The arguments supporting patentability of the claims are presented in detail below.

I. The Claimed Invention

The present invention, as recited in independent Claim 1, for example, is directed to a method for processing a visitor request over an intranet for a visitor visiting an organization.

The method comprises using the intranet within the organization for filling-out a visitor request form, submitting the filled-out visitor request form over the intranet within the organization, and creating a visitor database on the visitor based upon the filled-out visitor request form. The method further comprises transmitting a visitor approval request message via e-mail to at least one evaluator within the organization if approval is required. The visitor approval request message has a hyperlink to the filled-out visitor request form. An approval recommendation is submitted by the at least one evaluator via e-mail for updating the visitor database.

An advantage of the present invention is that the e-mail messages are easily transmitted and received over the intranet between employees within the same organization or company for processing the filled-out visitor request form. In

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addition, the hyperlinks embedded within the e-mail messages allow the evaluators - also within the same organization or company - to access the filled-out visitor request form to provide a user friendly and efficient method of distributing and validating the filled-out visitor request form within the same organization or company.

Independent method Claim 12 is similar to independent method Claim 1 but further recites that the visitor database includes classification of the visitor as a regular visitor or a foreign visitor, and that a visitor badge is issued based upon a validated filled-out visitor request form.

Independent device Claim 21 is directed to an intranet for processing a visitor request form and is similar to amended independent method Claim 1.

Independent device Claim 32 is directed to a computer-readable medium and is similar to amended independent method Claim 1.

II. The Claims Are Patentable

The Examiner rejected independent Claims independent Claims 1, 12, 21 and 32 over the Dietz et al. patent. In the Dietz et al. patent, a distributed computer network configuration aids an organization in managing engagements of non-employee workers who are supplied by a vendor. The organization maintains a computer system that is linked to a vendor's computer system. The vender's computer system is separate from the organization's

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computer system, as best illustrated in FIG. 2 in the Dietz et al. patent.

The Examiner has taken the position that "engaging manager" and "work assignment approver" are limited to "within the organization." The Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has mischaracterized the Dietz et al. patent since the vendor receiving the initial work request is clearly not within the organization. If the vendor was considered to be within the organization, then the figures in the Dietz et al. patent would have shown it so.

As clearly illustrated in FIGS. 2 and 3 in Dietz et al., the vendor **230** is external the organization's LAN **205**. Consequently, information is shared between the organization's computer system **218** and the vendor's computer system **230** via the WAN **225**. Even though a database management system is provided within the organization's LAN **205** for accessing a database to create, modify, store and access non-employee workers, work assignments, time reports, and possibly electronic versions of employment agreements - the request for a non-employee worker is provided to the vendor via the WAN **225**, which is external the organization.

In particular, Dietz et al. discloses that the distributed computer network has various nodes for communicating and sharing information between the organization and one or more vendors. Reference is directed to column 5, lines 23-25 of Dietz et al. and to FIG. 2, which provides:

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"The organization's LAN 205 may be linked via a wide area network (WAN) 225, such as the Internet, to a computer system 230 maintained by the vendor." (Emphasis added.)

Reference is also directed to column 2, lines 31-43 of Dietz et al., which provides:

"According to another aspect of the present invention, an engaging manager is responsible for requesting a non-employee worker who is suitable to fill a particular position. To find a suitable non-employee worker, the engaging manager may send an e-mail request to the vendor. Upon receipt of the e-mail request, the vendor may compile a list of all qualified and available non-employee workers. The engaging manager may then request a non-employee worker from the list and, via e-mail, seek the approval of a supervisor for engaging the non-employee worker." (Emphasis added.)

In other words, Dietz et al. discloses that a request for a visitor or non-employee worker is made by the organization over the Internet (i.e., external the organization's LAN) to the vendor supplying the visitor or non-employee. This is in sharp contrast to the claimed invention, where the visitor request form is filled-out and submitted over the intranet within the organization.

In fact, the Dietz et al. patent teaches away from the claimed invention since the object of the invention is to fill a need within the organization by contacting a vendor outside the

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organization. This need is in terms of requesting a temporary employee, and has nothing to do with obtaining the proper authorization for a visitor to the organization.

Moreover, the Dietz et al. patent fails to disclose the use of hyperlinks to the filled-out visitor request form associated with a visitor approval request message. The Examiner has taken the position that it would have been obvious to include a hyperlink to the specific visitor database within an e-mail between an engaging manager and a work assignment approver for purposes of eliminating the need for the approver to search the entire visitor database, thus saving time and expediting the approval process.

It appears that the Examiner is taking judicial notice that hyperlinks were common practice at the time of the invention. The Applicants respectfully disagree and submit that if hyperlinks were common practice, then why didn't the Dietz et al. make us of them? It thus appears that the Examiner is using impermissible hindsight reconstruction to modify Dietz et al. based on the Applicants' specification to produce the claimed invention.

The Dietz et al. patent fails to teach or suggest transmitting and receiving e-mail messages over the intranet between employees within the same organization or company for processing the filled-out visitor request form. In addition, the Dietz et al. patent fails to teach or suggest the use of hyperlinks embedded within the e-mail messages for allowing the evaluators - also within the same organization or company - to

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access the filled-out visitor request form to provide a user friendly and efficient method of distributing and validating the filled-out visitor request form within the same organization or company.


Accordingly, it is submitted that independent Claim 1 is patentable over Dietz et al. Independent Claims 12, 21 and 32 are similar to independent Claim 1. Therefore, it is submitted that these claims are also patentable over Dietz et al. In view of the patentability of the independent Claims 1, 12, 21 and 32, it is submitted that their dependent claims, which recite yet further distinguishing features of the invention, are also patentable. These dependent claims require no further discussion herein.

IV. CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments to the claims and the arguments provided herein, it is submitted that all the claims are patentable. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is requested in due course. Should any minor informalities need to be addressed, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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